REMARKS

Whereas the inventive process of this application achieves higher total yields (page 9, lines 1-3) in comparison to the table on page 12, it has been discovered that the purity values recited in claim 4 were those for the prior art since they are derived from the mentioned table.

New claims 13 and 14 correspond to the isolated and isolated and purified forms of the compound recited in claim 2 of parent USP 6,121,465. See page 3, both full paragraphs.

As is clear of record, 6β, 7β; 15β, 16β-dimethylene-3-oxo-17α-pregn-4-ene-21,17-carbolactone is known and has been prepared in the past . See, e.g., the references of record, e.g., example 2 of USP 4,904,462, example H of USP 4,435,327, etc.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attorney Docket No.: SCH-1664 C1

Date: September 18, 2002

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Services as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner For Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on September 18, 2002
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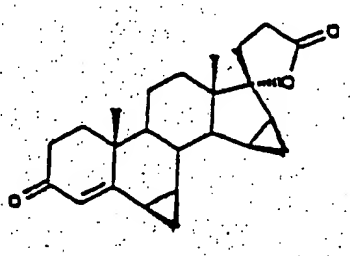
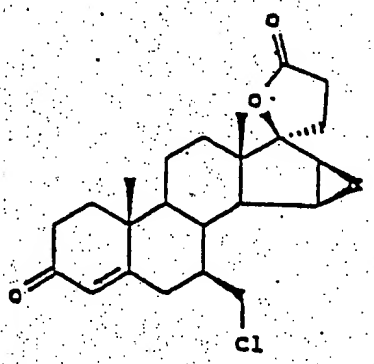
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Please amend the claims as follows:

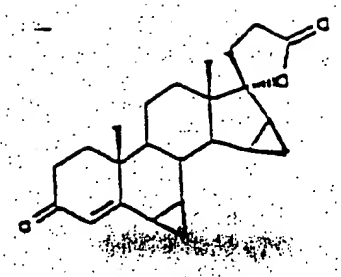
5. (Twice Amended) A composition comprising 6β,7β; 15β,16β-dimethylene-3-oxo-17α-pregn-4-ene-21,17-carbolactone [of claim 4], a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and less [then] than 0.2% by weight of said compound of the contaminants



and



9. (Twice Amended) A composition comprising 6ß, 7ß; 15ß, 16ß-dimethylene-3-oxo-17α -pregn-4-ene-21,17-carbolactone [of claim 4], a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and less [then] than 0.2% by weight of said compound of the contaminants



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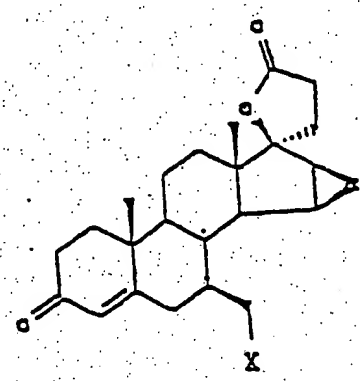
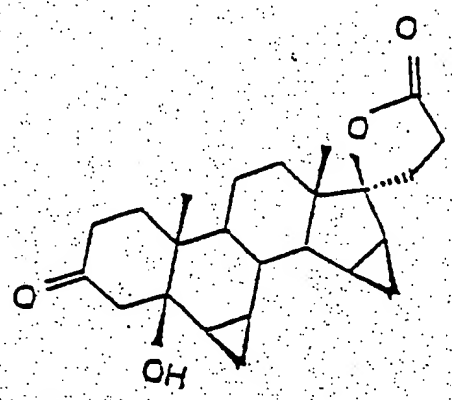


wherein X is an anion of an acid which is effective to open said 6β, 7β-methylene group.

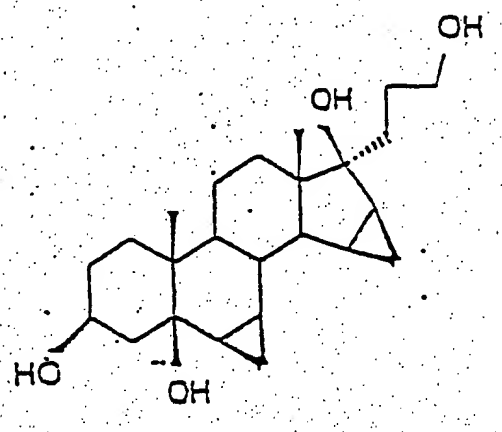
10. (Amended) A composition comprising

(a) 6β, 7β; 15β, 16β-dimethylene-3-oxo-17α-pregn-4-ene-21,17-carbolactone [of claim 4] made by a process comprising dehydrating a compound of Formula III,



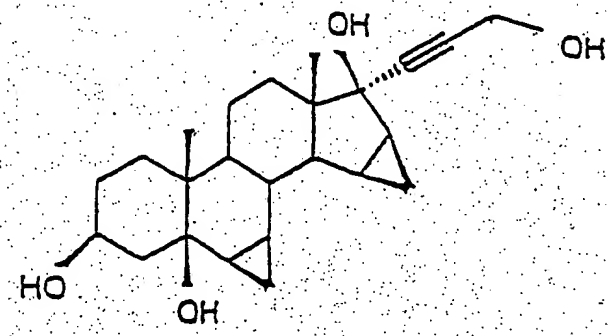
III

which was made by oxidizing in the presence of a ruthenium salt a compound of Formula II,



II

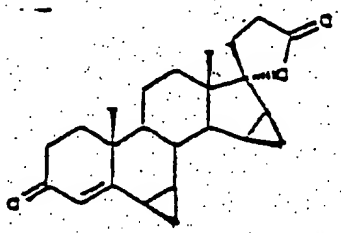
which was made by catalytically hydrogenating a compound of Formula I



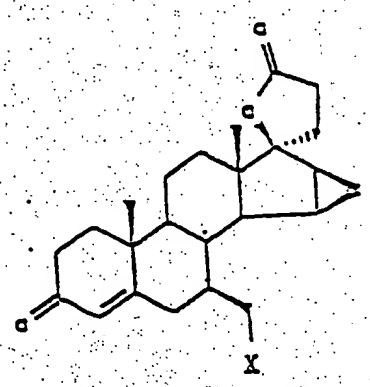
I

(b) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier; and

(c) less [then] than 0.2% by weight of said compound (a) of the byproducts of said preparation process which are



and



wherein X is an anion of an acid which is effective to open said 6β, 7β-methylene group.

12. (Amended) A compound of claim [6] 10, wherein in said process, said dehydrating is performed after said compound of Formula III is isolated from the medium in which it is prepared.